

COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Fiscal Year 2007

The Amherst Public Safety Communications Center continues to be one of the most professional and progressive in Western Massachusetts. The consistently high quality of service provided by our women and men gives testimony to their dedication to public safety and to those they serve.

We began the new fiscal year buoyed by the vote at spring Town Meeting to create two additional full time positions. This has had the expected broad and positive impact.

The expansion of our staff size relieved us from extraordinary amounts of mandatory overtime. Morale is at an all-time high, while our turn-over rate is at an all-time low. This has resulted in preserving both our bodies and our budget, and a higher quality of response to emergencies: our staff is healthier and more experienced, and we are not losing as much time to training new employees.

The Center experienced its single most critical multi-agency event to date with the explosion at Emerson Court last August. The outstanding performance of all five dispatchers involved resulted in a Commendation for Dispatcher Elizabeth Chudzik and letters of appreciation for her co-workers: Jessica Alvaro, Joshua Cicia, Jason Rushford and Christine Brunelle.

For an unprecedented number of times this year, dispatchers were instrumental in providing prompt life-saving measures for those in a medical emergency situation. On at least three occasions, instructing the caller in CPR contributed to the “breathing again” status of the patient prior to the arrival of the ambulance to the scene. Special mention is given to Dispatchers Carly Kinnas and Jason Rushford for their exceptional performance during several of these events.

A number of major structure fires in Amherst and Belchertown, as well as several serious assaults in progress, a fatal construction accident and a bank robbery underscore the increase in significance and frequency of the emergency activity channeled through the Center.

It was again possible for members of our staff to participate in the Fire Department Open House last fall and the Fire Department S.A.F.E. graduation this spring. The very positive response to our involvement has prompted several dispatchers to begin work on a 911 Public Education program.

During the National Public Safety Dispatcher Week, in April, our staff received recognition for their excellence on the *Walk of Fame* located in Daytona Beach, Florida at the headquarters for APCO International, the world’s oldest and largest not-for-profit professional organization dedicated to the enhancement of public safety communications.

After years of lobbying by members of the Massachusetts Communications Supervisors Association, the State created a training grant offered only to 911 Centers throughout the Commonwealth. Funded by the surcharges collected on your wire line and wireless phone bills, this grant is the first ever to be specific and exclusive to emergency dispatchers. I am proud of our efforts regarding this initiative and pleased by the subsequent funding awarded our center in response to our grant application.

The recent upgrade to our radio equipment, though not without challenge, was successfully completed. We look forward to the State's planned upgrade to our 911 phone equipment this fall, continued success with our current staffing model, and expanded opportunities for training.

In addition to Elizabeth Chudzik, Jessica Alvaro, Joshua Cicia, Carly Kinnas, Jason Rushford and Christine Brunelle, our staff includes Michael Curtin, Brad Worthley, Janet Sharp, Scott DelPozzo and Jennifer Guzik. I take pride and pleasure in working for and with our entire team of conscientious and highly skilled dispatch professionals and appreciate the support they have shown me in my role as Director.

Rita K. Burke

Personnel

Hired

Christine Brunelle	07/12/06
Daniel Lorenzatti	04/02/07

Terminated

Ann Misiaszek	09/06/06
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Resigned

Daniel Lorenzatti	06/09/07
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